

Approved For Release 2004/01/16 : CIA-RDP75-00449R000500330001-3

## THE WAR IN SOUTH VIETNAM

Mr. MORSE. Mr. President, my brief speech today, in opposition to McNamara's war in South Vietnam, is taken from the magazine Business Week for August 29, 1964. Business Week is certainly one of the most stable, moderate periodicals published in this country. So far as I am concerned, their article is my speech, for I associate myself with every word of it. It reads:

## NEW PROBLEM FOR UNITED STATES—HOPES FADE FOR SOUTH VIETNAM

(As rioters force strong man Khanh out of presidency, it becomes harder for administration to win war against Vietcong. Leaked CIA report hints at negotiations.)

The resignation this week of South Vietnamese strong man, Nguyen Khanh, from his newly acquired job as President strikes hard at U.S. hopes for a more vigorous prosecution of the war against the Communist Vietcong. In fact, at midweek, the big question in Washington no longer was whether the war could be won without carrying it to North Vietnam, but whether it could be won at all.

If the situation continues to deteriorate, U.S. policy in South Vietnam cannot help becoming a hot issue in the presidential campaign. And a political collapse in Saigon could hurt President Johnson at the polls in November.

## NEWS LEAK

The upheaval in Vietnam—the third in less than a year—came as the administration was shaken by the leak of a confidential study by the Central Intelligence Agency, which suggested that victory was impossible and negotiation probably inevitable in South Vietnam.

In the past, the administration has insisted that negotiation would be tantamount to handing the southeast Asian nation over to the Communists, if undertaken before South Vietnam met the military threat posed by Vietcong. Washington has bitterly opposed French President Charles de Gaulle's proposal for negotiations aimed at neutralizing Vietnam.

The CIA report is bound to shake confidence, both in Saigon and here at home, in the steadfastness and realism of U.S. policy. Senator BARRY GOLDWATER was quick to note the CIA study, and to warn the American people to be prepared for an announcement in the very near future of a negotiated peace in Vietnam. He went on to say that neutralization was an open door to Communist infiltration.

President Johnson is hoping, of course, that the lid can be kept on Vietnam until the election is over. But then, whoever wins will be forced to take a new hard look at the U.S. involvement in southeast Asia—barring a seemingly miraculous improvement in the situation there.

## MORE RUMORS

The political situation in Vietnam is confused and explosive. At midweek, Khanh apparently still was in control of the military forces that put him into power last January. But how much political control he would be able to maintain was not clear. He might be relegated to a strictly military role under a new government headed by someone else or, alternatively, forced to share political power with a civilian cabinet representing

Meanwhile, communal rioting between Buddhists and Catholics was continuing and, despite Khanh's political concessions, rumors of new military coups by supporters of former President Ngo Dinh Diem filled the air in Saigon. There were even more disturbing reports of an impending all-out offensive by the Vietcong aimed at wresting final victory from the confusion.

## SUPPORT—OR CONTEMPT?

The political upset in Saigon, ironically, was touched off by Khanh's moves last week to strengthen his political position by promulgating a new constitution and assuming the Presidency under it. He put stern restrictions on personal and political liberties, including strict press censorship, curfews, and the banning of demonstrations.

Buddhist and student leaders, fearing a return to the repressive tactics of the Diem regime, called their followers into the streets. Khanh, unlike Diem, refused to use force against the rioters, fearing to open a second front of civil war. He capitulated to rioters' demands that he scrap the constitution and his Presidency. Khanh's worried U.S. advisers hope his moderation will win him support but concede that it is as likely to win him contempt in a country used to strong rule.

## VULNERABLE POSITION

The U.S. role in the political disaster was not clear at midweek. Officials last week halted the new constitution and Khanh's assumption of the Presidency as likely to stabilize the political situation. This week, however, they were claiming privately that Khanh had acted largely on his own, and were critical of his refusal to consult political leaders before the new constitution was proclaimed.

Khanh's troubles underline how vulnerable the U.S. position in southeast Asia is to events beyond Washington's control.

The United States must back Khanh, as it did his predecessors, if he is to have a chance of winning the war. It must insist that victory can and must be won. But in the process much U.S. prestige is invested in Khanh's fortunes, much more in the outcome of the war.

High U.S. officials this week are at pains to point out that the U.S. position in Vietnam, which was released to the press this week

after having been leaked to the Chicago Tribune.

But some officials this week, despite these disclaimers, were beginning privately to look again at the possibilities of a negotiated settlement in Vietnam.

Mr. President, this article in Business Week clearly summarizes the situation in South Vietnam. The American people are beginning to recognize more and more that our position in South Vietnam is untenable morally, militarily, and legally. More and more the American people are beginning to appreciate the fact that we owe it to the history of our country and we owe it to the boys who will be killed unjustifiably in the months ahead in the uncalled for American participation in the war in South Vietnam, to get this issue back within the framework of international law, as the Senator from Alaska [Mr. GRUENING] and the Senator from Oregon have pleaded for at least 6 months on the floor of the Senate.

The ugly reality is that the United States, although it uses other semantic terms, is following a policy of colonialism in South Vietnam. We have set up a puppet protectorate in South Vietnam. We are seeking to operate it as colonial powers operated colonies in generations gone by. No white nation will ever be able to maintain a colony in the yellow part of the world. Let us face the issue.

Therefore, I close tonight by pleading again that the United States stop its unilateral military action in southeast Asia; that we stop supporting a military dictatorship; that we stop joining that military dictatorship in stamping out freedom in South Vietnam; and that we lay the whole issue before the United Nations or before a 14-nation conference, as recommended by President de Gaulle, for the application of international law for its settlement.

Approved For Release 2004/01/16 : CIA-RDP75-00449R000500330001-3